

# Public Involvement Policy

February 3, 2026





# Agenda

Topic	Presenters	Estimated Time
Welcome and Opening Remarks	Joel Scruggs, Chief Communications Officer  Kim Thompson, vice president of Northwest Requirements Marketing	[10 min]
Background	Maryam Habibi, manager of Media, Policy & Writing	[20 min]
Policy Overview and Proposed Changes	Sarah Burczak, Provider of Choice Policy Lead	[45 min]
Next Steps		[15 min]

Note: Times are approximate.

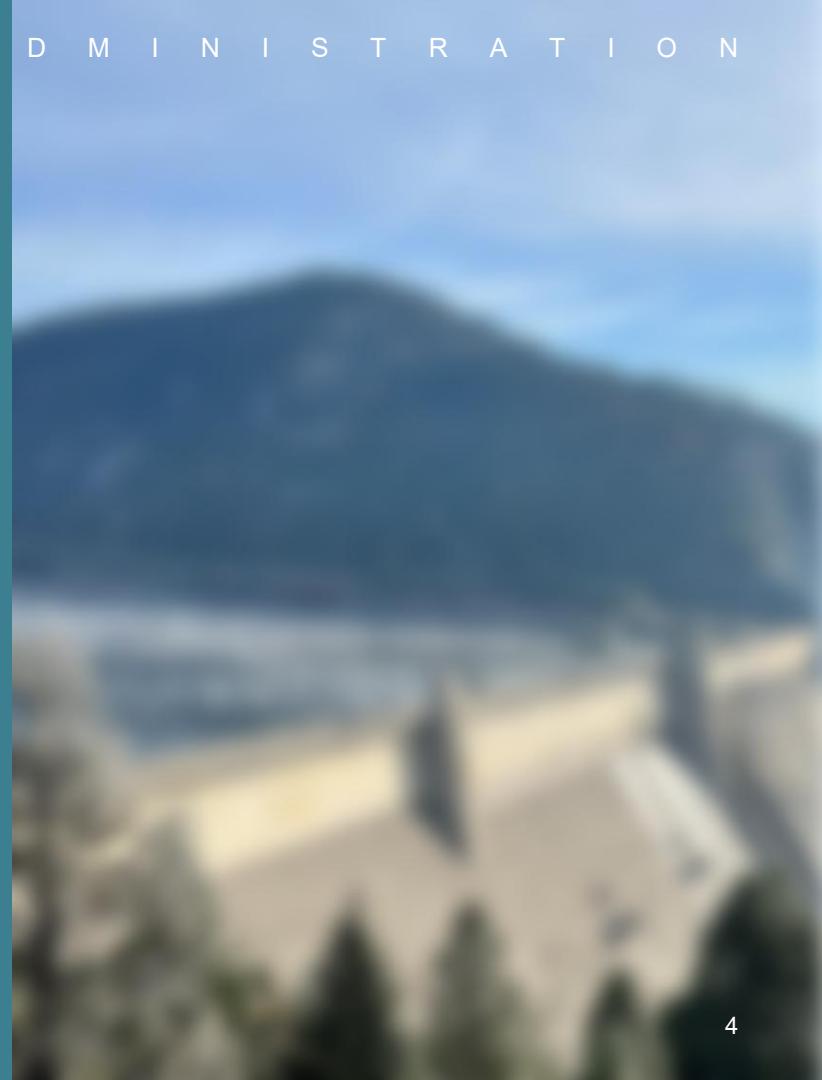
# Workshop Objectives

## Today's objectives:

- Educate on what the Policy for Public Involvement is and why BPA has it.
- Discuss policy content and potential changes.
- Gather feedback on what policy elements should be reviewed in future workshops.



# Background





# 1980 Northwest Power Act

- Section 4(g)(1) of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act (Northwest Power Act) states:

*To insure widespread public involvement in the formulation of regional power policies, the Council and Administrator shall maintain comprehensive programs to inform the Pacific Northwest public of major regional power issues, obtain public view concerning major regional power issues, and secure advice and consultation from the Administrator's customers and others.*

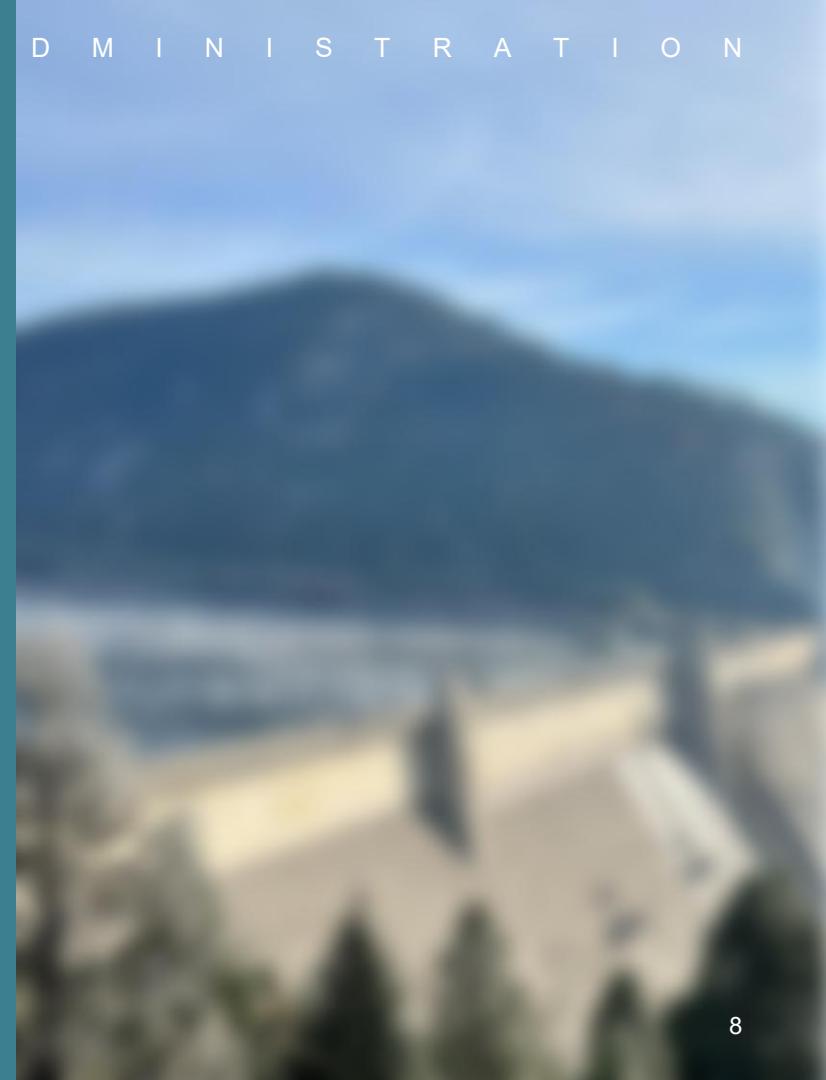
# History of Related Policies

- BPA first fulfilled the Northwest Power Act requirement by establishing the Procedure for Public Participation in Major Regional Power Policy Formulation in 1981.
- In 1986, BPA published the Policy for Public Involvement (P.I. Policy), which revised the 1981 procedure.

# Why update the P.I. Policy?

- BPA committed to a review of the P.I. Policy including whether updates were warranted.
- Staff believe the P.I. Policy could be modernized. Examples include:
  - General clean-up of errors (spelling, formatting, etc.).
  - Clean-up of the policy such as the list of definitions included in Section IV.
  - Additional considerations addressed later in this presentation.

# Policy Overview and Proposed Updates



# Introduction

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# Objective and Purpose

## 1986 Policy:

- Outlines that the policy will “clarify for the public how it can expect to be informed of actions under consideration by BPA and to take part in the deliberations leading to BPA’s decisions.”
- Preserves Administrator’s discretion to react quickly as well as conduct routine business.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to include citation to the Northwest Power Act, which previously was only included in the Federal Register Notice.

# Definitions

## 1986 Policy:

- Definitions include references to key participants (like public v. interested person v. customers), the Administrator, and types of public forums.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff recommend reviewing definitions after major policy elements matures to determine any necessary changes to align with updated policy framework.

# Scope

## 1986 Policy:

- Applies to major regional power policy.
- May apply to actions like planning activities or program development related to energy conservation, generating resources, fish and wildlife resources, and the transmission system as well as the 1985 Fish and Wildlife Consultation Procedures.
- Exempts the processes with established procedures from policy including: (A) interpretive rule making; (B) internal rules or procedures; (C) 7(i) rate proceedings; and (D) 6(c) major resource acquisition process.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to review what is defined as a major regional power policy, current exemption references to ensure up to date, and whether any additional processes should be exempt such as procedures defined by Section 212(i)(2)(A) of the Federal Power Act regarding tariff changes.

# Public Involvement for Major Regional Power Policies

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# Notice of Intent for Policy

## 1986 Policy:

- BPA must publish a notice of intent when planning to formulate a new policy.
- The notice must include:
  - Subject of policy and explanation of the need.
  - Cites to legal authority.
  - Whether new policy would affect existing policies.
  - May be combined with notice of policy alternatives.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to review methods for publishing a notice of intent.

# Notice for Policy Alternatives

## 1986 Policy:

- The Administrator may determine it's appropriate to describe and request input on alternatives to a proposed policy to assist BPA in developing the new policy. The notice should include:
  - Text of alternatives.
  - Schedule of public meetings, information on proceedings, and any opportunity to comment including comment deadlines.

## Potential Changes:

- None.

# Public Meetings

## 1986 Policy:

- Outlines requirements for public meetings if Administrator determines need.
- Meetings can:
  - Provide information on proposed policy.
  - Allow public review of technical data or methodology.
  - Provide interim public comment.

## Potential Changes:

- None.

# Notice of Proposed Policy

## 1986 Policy:

- After notice of intent, and policy alternatives if applicable, Administrator shall post a proposed policy and notice. This includes:
  - Text of proposed policy.
  - Time/schedule for public comment forums.
  - Deadline for written comments and how to submit.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to review use of public comment forums (next slide) and methods for comments.

# Public Comment Forums

## 1986 Policy:

- Policy states that BPA should offer public comment forums for those interested in submitting formal alternatives or comments orally.
- The section outlines notice requirements and establishing procedures including how BPA will arrange forums and time limits for those submitting comments.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to cut this section to remove public comment forums from the policy and to limit comments to written comments, which has become standard practice.

# Time Allowed for Comment

## 1986 Policy:

- When practicable, Administration should allow for at least 30 days for the public to submit written comments.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff propose to revisit the timeline for submitting comments, which was established when materials were printed and mailed out and then comments were sent back through mail.

# Decision Document and Notice of Final Policy

## 1986 Policy:

- Following comment period, BPA shall notice final policy and include a decision document that covers:
  - Description of proposed action.
  - Summary of comments.
  - Evaluation of proposed action,
  - Administrator's decision and concise summary of reason for decision.

## Potential Changes:

- None. Note that this can take the form of a record of decision or a close-out letter.

# Methods for public notification

## 1986 Policy:

- Notices should be published in the Federal Register or elsewhere as determined by the Administrator.
- Administrator may also send directly to parties who have previously expressed interest or publish in a newspaper.

## Potential Changes:

- Staff proposes to review public notification methods and determine whether section needs to be updated.

# Procedures for Expedited Decision making

## 1986 Policy:

- If the Administrator finds good cause to expedite a procedure, Administrator may waive all requirements previously described.
- The Administrator shall include any rationale for expedited procedure in the policy, including for any interim policies.

## Potential Changes:

- None.

# Other

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# Public Involvement for Other Actions

## 1986 Policy:

- “The Administrator may determine that it is appropriate to conduct public involvement on other selected BPA actions.”
- Other actions may include:
  - Formulation of policies.
  - Planning activities or program development related to energy conservation, generating resources, fish and wildlife resources, and the transmission system.
  - Other actions related to major power issues.

## Potential Changes:

- None.

# Other Actions (cont.)

## 1986 Policy:

- Level of public involvement will consider:
  - Precedential nature of action.
  - Impact on customers/general public and level of interest.
  - Time available for completing the process.

## Potential Changes:

- None.

# Relationship to NEPA

## 1986 Policy:

- P.I. Policy will be implemented concurrently with any requirements outlined under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

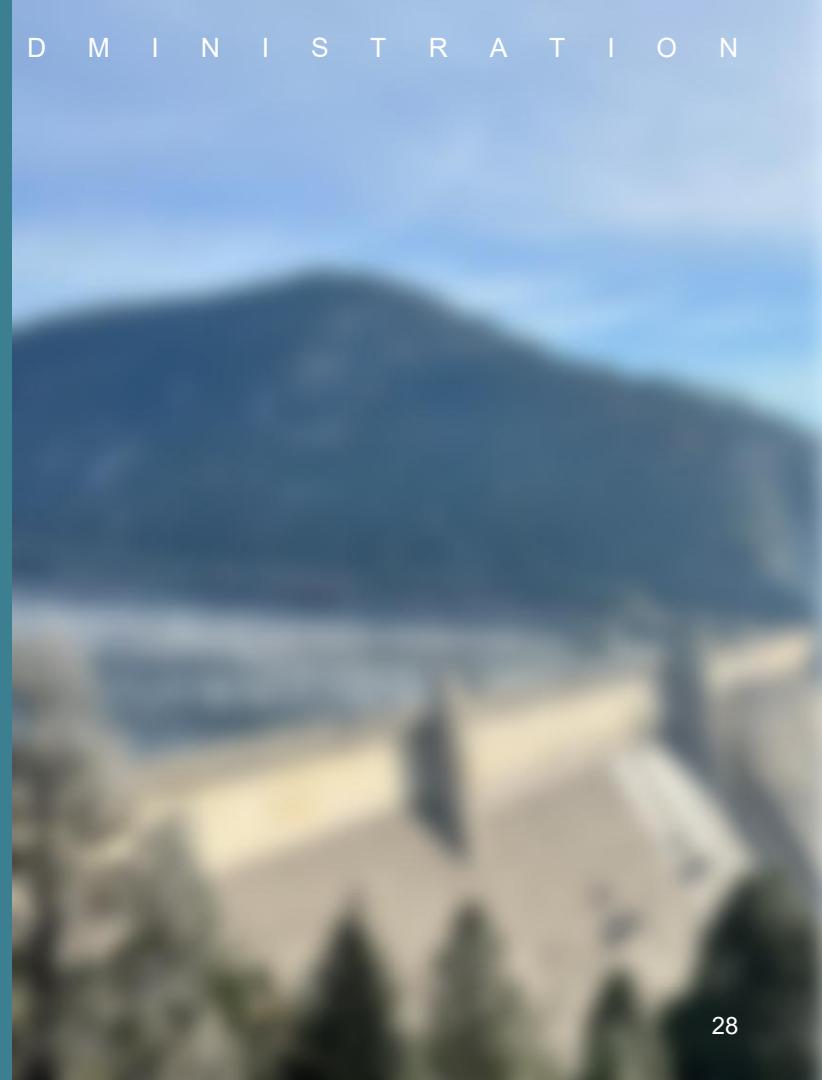
## Potential Changes:

- None.

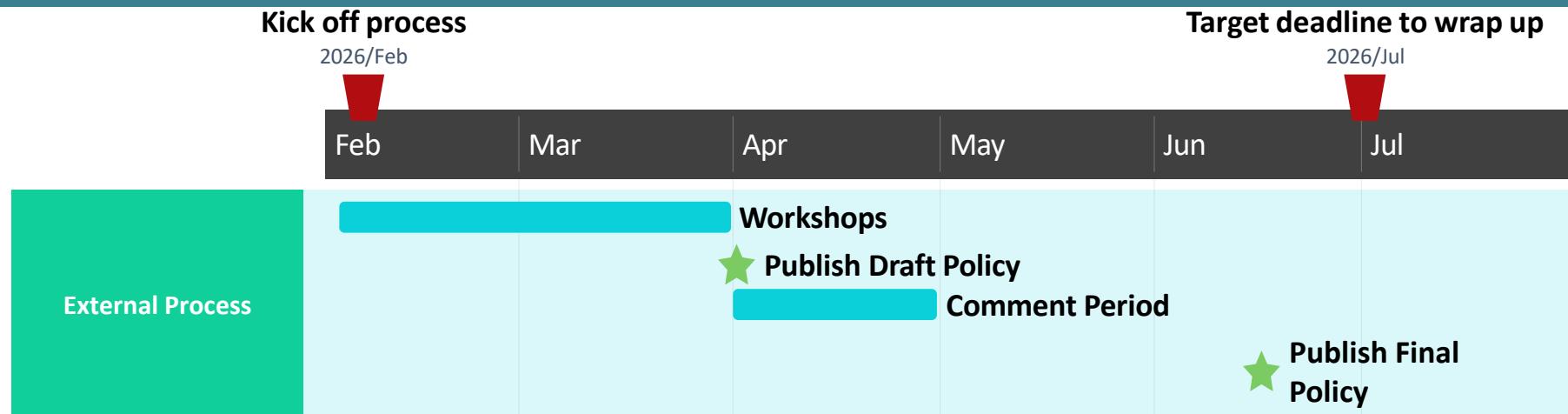
# Discussion

- What is missing from updates you would like to discuss?
- Any concerns with proposed areas of review?

# Next Steps



# Draft Timeline



# Feedback

- Feedback on scope or proposed changes due by COB February 11, 2026.
- Send feedback or questions to [communications@bpa.gov](mailto:communications@bpa.gov).

# Thank you!

